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Exploration in Design,
Graphic Communications and the Creative Process

BY

Starla A. Stensaas

CREATIVE PROJECT

A Major Paper in Lieu of the
Traditional

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Arts in Related Arts

in the Graduate School, Eastern Illinois University
Charleston, Illinois

1980
year

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ABSTRACT

In lieu of the traditional thesis, I have chosen to culminate the Master of Arts in Related Arts program with a creative project and a paper that describes and evaluates the completion of the project. The project involved a personal aesthetic and technical development of the aesthetic in graphic design and communications. Documentation of the creative arts project is presented in a portfolio which includes graphic designs, publications, and news feature stories. The project is interdisciplinary in that it involves skills in art (design) and English (writing) as well as effective interdisciplinary communication skills necessary to produce interdepartmental publications.

Included in the portfolio are: a resumé; Celebration '80 program and flyers; letterhead, business card, and opening invitations for the Art Gallery Co-op; poster and program for the play "Only an Orphan Girl"; the graduate art exhibition catalog; public relations articles about Celebration '80 and "Only an Orphan Girl"; news feature articles about the arts; and Around the Arts, an Eastern Illinois University School of Fine Arts publication.

The paper describes and evaluates the completion of the creative arts project by exploring varying philosophies

encountered while working on the creative arts project concerning the nature of art and the creative process. The paper also explores the effectiveness of the materials of the portfolio in terms of integration of the visual and written aspects and the elements of design. The paper discusses line, color, shape, texture, and form as related to the materials of the portfolio. The conclusion of the paper is specifically addressed to a description of the creative process with examples given from the process of designing the materials of the portfolio.

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CREATIVE PROJECT

Exploration in Design, Graphic Communications, and the Creative Process

I. Introduction

In graphic design used by print media, the message assumes greater importance than in other forms of design, but it is always an aspect of design whether it is used as a block of type, a line of type, or an illustration. As a viewer or consumer of design, I respond positively to the use of type as a powerful visual message. A good layout for me is one that integrates the visual message with the written message in a manner that supports the entire composition. An intellectual understanding of design elements allows the designer to analyze how well a composition integrates its various messages.

I personally approach graphic design as a functional art form that encompasses the same elements of design, such as line, shape, color, and texture, as do other art forms. Because graphics are employed by media as a tool of communication, graphic design differs from other art forms (such as painting or sculpture, for example) in the way in which it is marketed. The effectiveness of a design is often measured in terms of budget and audience targets. Yet without the effective use of line, shape, color, and texture in the written and visual aspects of a composition, budget and audience make little difference. An effective design integrates the visual message

with the written message in a manner that appeals aesthetically to the viewer.

In designing the materials of my portfolio, I was confronted with varying approaches to graphic design. The Master of Arts in Related Arts program's greatest strength for me has been the many ideas and philosophies I have been confronted with while working with people from different schools and departments. This has been useful to me with my publications work because the start-to-finish process of producing a publication involves many people of varying philosophies. What may be good design in the eye of the artist may be bad design in the eye of the pressman who may have to use expensive processes or make time-consuming alterations.

Working in the School of Technology Education's communications lab, I found the emphasis was on processes and efficiency. Most of my work in the communications lab involved shooting line copy and halftone camera work and assisting the pressman. Particularly in camera work, efficiency means being able to analyze the work and make needed adjustments in exposure or chemical temperature using a minimal amount of expensive film. In the communications lab, the best method is the least expensive, the fastest, and the most efficient. The most obvious example of the difference between the technology education approach and the approach I encountered in the art department's visual communications courses was the method of preparing a halftone negative for

the graduate art exhibition catalog. Because I was working in the visual communications room when I was preparing the halftone negatives, I followed the procedure suggested by Terry Roller and used a technical pen to ink in the lines designating the outer edge of the image area. Later I was shown a more efficient method in the communications lab using a specially prepared masking tape to give the image area a clean, exact edge much more quickly.

Another example of varying approaches to graphic design involved the theatre arts students working on the melodrama "Only an Orphan Girl," and the graduate art students' approach to the graduate art exhibition catalog. The theatre arts students allowed me more freedom in choosing and preparing the graphics for the play than did the art students. This difference can probably be explained by looking at the basic philosophies of the nature of art and the importance placed on the artifact by the two groups. More restrictions were placed on my choice of the final appearance and design of the graduate art exhibition catalog by the art students. Perhaps this is because as practising painters, drawers, sculptors, or metalsmiths, they are involved more closely with the artifact than the theatre arts students. The result of the artist's work is the artifact and much emphasis in graduate study is placed on producing a portfolio of slides to document the artifact. The theatre arts students, on the other hand, practise their art in time. The creative process is their work and the artifact, the performance, is not constant like a sculpture or drawing. For this reason, the

theatre arts students exercised less control over the final product and held the creative and technical processes of producing the graphics in higher esteem.

The following pages have resulted from research that took place before or during the preparation of the graphic designs compiled in my portfolio. The ideas set forth in these pages reflect my perspective on and understanding of how the elements of design affect overall composition. I am aware however, that because the designer's intuitive creative image and sense of balance are basic to good design, these ideas are merely guidelines which allow the designer a method of communication and visualization of problems inherent in design. A good designer can break traditional formulas and criteria, opening new avenues of creative expression. It is the breaking away, the discovery of new ideas and techniques that keep the arts alive and vital.

II. Design Elements

Line

Line is generally the most important design element in graphic design because of the nature of language and type. Because our written language is linear and the message is of particular significance in graphic design, type in lines or columns emphasizes line in the overall composition.

Line is man-made, symbolizing graphic ideas that create shape, movement, mood and order in a composition. The location of line unifies or divides a composition, creates

balance or imbalance. Line as a method of creating order by unifying or dividing a composition is often used in magazine or newspaper layout. In the 1800's, typography relied heavily on lines to divide type, evolving into the common use of headline decks in which the main headline is followed by headlines set in smaller type. The 1800's approach to line is the most obvious feature of the graphics of "Only an Orphan Girl" which gives the poster and program a sense of the play's period. I have also used line to create order, divide information and balance the page in the Celebration '80 program. The columns act as visual lines to create order and balance on the page and the three point black rule on page four divides information about folk artists and craftsmen from information about Celebration committee members. Balance is achieved both in the visual appearance of the page as well as the written content through the use of the black rule.

The direction a line takes affects the mood and movement in a composition. Clean, straight lines are static and eliminate angles that can clutter a composition, whereas curved lines create pleasing, rhythmic, organic moods. Again, the use of columns as linear shape eliminates clutter in the Celebration '80 program center spread, as do the white linear shapes created by the column gutters. On the other hand, the implied line of the woman's curved arm on the Celebration '80 dance flyer creates a rhythmic mood, reflecting the content of the flyer.

Vertical lines show potential for activity and create some movement in a composition much the same as suggested by a standing body. For this reason, the vertical format of my resumé, which is emphasized by the short fold and the strong linear reverse (the black area), suggests a potential for activity and movement. Horizontal lines, on the other hand, express quiet and repose much the same as a reclining or sleeping body does. Angular lines often express excitement or confusion, thereby adding movement although sometimes disorder to the composition. Diagonal lines are the most fluid, suggesting motion and active movement, such as the implied line in the Celebration '80 dance flyer.

Implied line can also create excitement and movement. Actual line can be broken and picked up again in order to create implied line, or shadows and shapes can create an implied line through placement. The line of vision implied by the eyes of figures or faces in a composition also creates implied line, affecting the balance and unity of the page. Type can also act as a 'line of vision' or create implied line when the reader perceives the message to be incomplete or continued in another part of the composition. A line of type directs the eye towards the right. For this reason, other elements such as a block of type or an illustration are often lined up to a headline to unify the visual message with the written message.

Shape

Shape in graphic design can assume several forms and is the most important design element when considering balance. Type set in columns is usually perceived by the viewer to be a block of type and functions as a shape. Shape is also commonly used to illustrate the message of the composition in drawings or photographs. White space also functions as a significant shape.

Shape is created by line or value changes that designate an outer edge. The two basic varieties of shape are curvilinear and rectilinear. Curvilinear shapes are curved and irregular, suggesting organic biomorphic forms. Rectilinear shapes have a geometric mood created by hard straight edges, often developing a static composition.

Positive and negative areas, or figure and ground, are important when considering shape. Without integration of the positive and negative shape elements, shapes within the composition may appear pasted on. Integrating positive and negative areas can be achieved through repetition of color and/or line in both areas. In the Celebration '80 program, the green balloon shape is repeated in the circular area containing two children on page two, and again by the moon within the circular area.

Shape symbolizes weight in a composition, thereby creating balance or imbalance through placement. Dark shapes are heavier than light shapes; thick line is heavier than thin line. Balance is achieved on the folded format of my

resumé by opening up the black space with white type and moving the black type on the white page to the bottom of the page. This makes the dark area of the black reverse lighter and the light area of the white paper heavier.

Rhythm is also controlled by the placement and dominance a shape receives on the picture plane. The degree of dominance is equal to the amount of visual contrast in size, value, and location the shape commands. The areas where the eye pauses between shapes (the white space) create rhythm as an eye moves from shape to shape. Oval shapes often gain more attention if the viewer perceives them to be heads, as in the Celebration '80 theatre arts flyer. A square shape often suggests perfection, stability, solidarity, symmetry, and self-reliance. Blocks of type often function as square shapes.

On the front page of the Celebration '80 program, rhythm and balance are controlled horizontally by the figure shapes and the boldness (darkness) of the type. On the left, the figure is larger, in a more prominent position, and above a block of bold type. Rhythm and balance are achieved because the figure on the right is a blacker mass and the face, a hot area in any composition, is directed towards the more prominent left. The light type block beneath the dark figure balances because of its larger size and because it corresponds in lightness with the figure on the left. The page balances vertically because the heavier elements, the

shapes and blocks of type, are near the bottom of the page while the 'heavy' type is near the top. The repetition of the balloons, which commands more attention because of the color element, also creates vertical rhythm and balance.

Shape is also instrumental as a framing device. If shape or line is allowed to run off the picture plane, an open composition is the result. The artist figure on the corner of the Celebration '80 visual arts flyer acts as a shape framing the corner of the composition. The shape on the bottom corner of page four of the Celebration '80 program opens the page because the shape of the tree and ground runs off the page and the children's faces create an implied line that also runs off the page. Most of the shape and line in the graphics for "Only an Orphan Girl" act as framing devices in the tradition of the late 1800 typography. Stage curtains, of course, act as a framing device on stage as well as in the program.

Pictorial depth is often created by the kind of shape used in a composition. Deep space is created through the use of volume and massive shape. Because type has little volume or massive shape, deep space in graphic design is usually contained within the illustrations or photographs instead of in the overall composition. Shallow space is created through the use of planes, often placed over one another with some areas of transparency to suggest depth. In the Celebration '80 program, the planes are designated by color, the balloons on one plane and the other shapes and copy on another. Depth is achieved by overlapping

shapes with balloons such as the children shape on page two and by placing balloons in the 'sky' such as the children shape on page four. Depth is also achieved by placing shapes over shapes in the Celebration '80 literary and film events flyer. The film and reel appear to be resting on the book and the Lone Ranger and Buster Keaton figures appear to exist on a plane in front of the trailing film.

Color

Color in graphic design is the most expensive consideration. For each color in a composition, a camera-ready layout must be made, a negative must be shot, a plate must be burned, and on small presses a press run must be made. In each of these steps, the copy must be kept in register so that the color will be printed in the correct areas. On large web presses which can handle three-color runs, the pressman must constantly keep an eye on the register, adjusting it frequently. This requires extra personnel to run the press. When colors are to be printed over one another to make other colors, extra steps involving color-keying must take place. Because of these considerations, printing color is expensive and time-consuming. Rarely does a designer who is working on start-to-finish graphic designs use more than two colors because of the cost and time limitations as well as the usual limited equipment capabilities in a small start-to-finish operation.

Color has instinctive visual appeal, however, and is a very effective design element that can express emotion

or cultural symbolism. The uninhibited use of color has been a primary characteristic of art in this century. Color is actually the property of light that allows the human eye to perceive certain light wave lengths reflected by objects. White is the result of all wavelengths being reflected from a surface; black is the result of all wavelengths visible to the human eye being absorbed.

A color wheel is an arrangement of color pigments. A color in the color wheel is referred to as a hue, the name of the color. In a 12 color wheel, the primary hues are red, yellow, and blue. By mixing the two primary colors, the secondary hues of green, purple, and orange are formed. A mixture of a primary color and a neighboring secondary color forms one of the intermediate hues: blue-green, yellow-green, yellow-orange, red-orange, red-violet, and blue-violet.

Value is the lightness or darkness of a hue and is produced by adding white or black to the hue. A tint is a hue to which white has been added. A shade is a hue to which black has been added. There are about 40 shades and tints of each hue that can be perceived by the human eye.

Intensity refers to the brightness of a color. A color is most brilliant when unmixed. The intensity is lowered when the hue is mixed with its complement, the color directly across the color wheel, or gray. Simultaneous contrast is an effect achieved when two complements are used next to each other, intensifying the brilliance of both

colors.

Color also affects depth in a composition. Generally, the relationship between pictorial space and color is defined by warm colors (red, orange, and yellow) coming forward and the cool colors (blue, green, and violet) dropping back. In the Celebration '80 program, the green balloons recede because shapes are placed over them and because they are cool receding colors. However, grayed warm colors will recede next to brilliant cool colors. Neutrals (gray, black, and white) also tend towards coolness whereas neutralized colors, two complements mixed, are warmer.

The tonality of a composition is the mixing of a hue and its tints and shades in such a way that the hue dominates the color structure of a composition. A monochromatic color harmony is one where one hue varies in value, presenting a harmonious and restful composition. This effect is achieved in a relatively inexpensive way by creating a duotone on the press. A duotone prints one color of ink directly over another color, creating a shade to the hue if one color of ink is black. An analogous color harmony adds several colors which are next to each other on the color wheel, also producing a harmonious composition. A complementary color harmony uses two hues separated equally on the color wheel, presenting a contrasting and lively composition.

Color can be chosen to contrast with or repeat the emotional qualities of line and shape. Circular, curving

lines can be chosen with warm colors to present a unified, organic composition, whereas angular lines and shapes can be chosen with cool colors to present a static, ordered composition. Color also has symbolic and cultural qualities that can communicate ideas within a culture or about the culture. Many of these meanings have evolved from religious and mythical beliefs.

Color was the least important consideration in compiling my portfolio because of the prohibitive cost of printing color. Although I feel color is one of the elements of graphic design that communicates on an immediate, emotional level, pulling the viewer immediately into the composition, the cost and time limitations made it impractical for use on the materials of my portfolio.

Texture

Texture is a surface characteristic that appeals to the sense of touch although it may exist in a two-dimensional space. In graphic design, texture enriches the pictorial area and helps to define the heavy and light areas of a composition. Graphic design exists in a two-dimensional space that rarely has a surface quality except that of the paper. Therefore, texture in graphic design appeals to the sense of touch through a sensory reaction in the memory.

In more general terms, texture is often used to describe an object by appealing to the sense of touch in combination with the visual sense. A tactile texture is one that can

actually be felt and takes up three-dimensional space, such as the texture of a weaving or an oil painting when heavy pigments are applied with an impasto technique or when another medium, such as chalk, is added to the paint. A simulated texture is one that carefully renders the texture of an actual object in a two-dimensional area, such as in oil paintings where the texture of cloth next to skin is rendered realistically. An invented texture is one existing in a two-dimensional space in a non-representational way. Texture in graphic design most nearly falls into the invented texture classification although the texture is determined by factors such as type face and style rather than through the concept or image on the part of the designer. Photographs and illustrations used in graphic designs often contain simulated textures.

Finely detailed texture creates a feeling of nearness while blurred or indistinct detail creates distance, clarifying spatial suggestions. Texture can also control the pattern of a composition in terms of relative dominance because a heavily textured area draws attention to itself. For example, on the front page of the Celebration '80 program, several changes in texture occur through the variety of type faces, sizes, and styles, as well as through the variety and shape of the lines. In this way texture draws attention to the front page of the program.

Contrasts in typeface, alphabet, tonal quality and type size create texture on the graphic page, emphasizing

parts of the visual message and providing focal points that concentrate the reader/viewer's attention.

Uppercase alphabets are generally thought of as monumental, formal, and authoritative in character. They should be used in groups of less than a dozen words to avoid a clumsy look and lack of legibility. Copy set in uppercase alphabet is more difficult to read and occupies 40 to 50% more space than copy set in lowercase alphabets. Therefore, uppercase alphabets command more weight. Texture is often a matter of contrast between upper and lower cases on a page.

Lowercase alphabets are less rigid, more informal, and less intimidating than uppercase alphabets and are more legible in copy exceeding a dozen words. The logo for the Art Gallery Co-op was chosen in lowercase Hobo typeface for its informality, which corresponds with the atmosphere of the gallery. Choosing the appropriate alphabet can solve problems of lines that are too short or long for the given width. Lowercase italic typefaces are more economical in line length than roman and present a graceful, casual texture, although readability is decreased.

The length of line and choice of typeface affect the balance and textural qualities of the composition. The slope of the italic typeface, derived from handwriting, imparts a sense of movement. The most striking contrast in texture is between roman uppercase alphabets and italic lowercase alphabets. The system of headlining items in bold, large, roman uppercase followed by smaller, italic

headline decks creates a striking contrast which draws the reader into the story. Texture, or contrast in texture, helps the reader to distinguish the stories in order of importance.

Using a bold typeface gives emphasis, greater apparent size, and contrast to the regular typeface copy. The bold block of type on the center of the Celebration '80 program's front page is a good example. Emphasis is given to the center block because of its bold typeface and larger size which also distinguishes the copy as the most important copy on the page. Bold type does not need as large point size as the regular typeface to assume the importance of regular typeface in larger point sizes. However, the heavier the type is, or appears to be, the more white space is needed to create the proper balance and spacing. Leading (the white space between lines of type) is often increased in bold type body copy to insert white space into the block of type. Using bold typeface often adds to the liveliness of a design and helps to establish a priority in content.

There are several factors to consider when choosing a typeface. The size of the page often designates which typeface should be used. Oblong, wide pages call for wide typefaces, whereas upright formats call for slightly condensed faces. The legibility of a typeface is also dependent on the length of the line, the alphabet choice, and the length of the copy.

White space is also a consideration of texture. A block of type set with no leading has a heavier, finer

texture than a block of type set with 1 or 2 points of leading. The justification of a block of type also affects the texture by shaping the white space. Copy set flush left is easiest to read and creates an irregular white space. However, the white space is not the dominant element when copy is set flush left because the eye can easily find the beginning of the line of type, placing the dominance on the type. Copy set flush right is more difficult to read and places dominance on the white space as the eye searches for line beginnings. Used in small amounts or in advertising, copy set flush right adds variety and movement to the page. Copy that is set in justified columns creates a flat texture in type and white space, putting more emphasis on the texture of the typeface or alphabet choice. In the Celebration '80 flyers, the copy is set flush left to allow for readability, but also to add variety of shape and texture through the irregular white space.

Type size and style also affects the texture of the page. Because type is read in horizontal lines, serif type creates a more horizontal, linear emphasis in texture by creating a visual connection between the letters. Sanserif type breaks up the horizontal line, creating a cleaner, more distant texture. The names of the artist in the Art Gallery Co-op opening invitation were set in sanserif, Oracle, typeface to give an air of objectivity.

Many of these distinctions become blurred as other

consideration come into focus. The texture of body type interacts with the texture of headline type, photos, line art, and other elements on the page. Again, I must point out that intuitive feel on the part of the designer is the most important consideration in graphic design.

Form--Symmetrical Layout

Symmetrical layout is a classical idea that evolved from the Mediterranean cultures of the Egyptians, the Greeks, and the Romans. Classical balance in early architecture demanded that the left and right sides of a structure mirror each other without regard to function. When printing was in its infancy in the 16th century, the idea of classical balance without regard to function obviously affected early layout. Later, in the 18th century, when type was not laid out symmetrically, decorative borders, such as those used on the "Only an Orphan Girl" graphics, were used to enclose and organize space into an unbreakable pattern.

A symmetrical effect is satisfying at a deep level of human consciousness and instills feelings of permanence, stability, and authority. Although the Celebration '80 flyers did not follow strict symmetrical layout, the overall effect was symmetrical to emphasize the permanence and continuation of the Celebration festival. Through association, symmetrical layout also implies a feeling of tradition because symmetry was the first rule of thumb in laying out type as printing developed.

Modern magazine designers generally feel, however, that symmetrical balance offers the viewer a too simple, too obvious statement that is not intellectually pleasurable or challenging. For these designers, balance is a matter of 'feel' rather than symmetrical formula. One cannot deny, however, that symmetry offers an elegant, rich, classical effect.

When type is laid out symmetrically, each line should contain one key word--a noun, verb, adjective, adverb or key phrase. Less important words, such as conjunctions, prepositions, and pronouns should appear on the line with words of more importance. Type laid out in this fashion is easier to read and creates pleasing shapes through line beginnings and endings.

Because the dominant visual impression created by lines of type is horizontal parallel lines, the beginnings and endings of those lines are a noticable feature. The eye connects the ends of lines and forms them into shapes such as curves and triangles. Because curves are more pleasing to the eye and represent natural forms, they are often used to create pleasing layout.

The main weight in symmetrical layout should lie above the halfway mark so that the composition will not be bottom-heavy. Long lines should not be alternated with short lines because the overall shape created by beginnings and endings of parallel lines is then divided. Two lines of equal length suggest special connections in the meanings of the

lines because two parallels are created: the horizontal parallel of two lines of type and the vertical parallel of similar line beginnings and endings. The verticals formed by two lines of equal length are stronger than the shape of the whole and should be avoided unless the meaning demands it. However, type does not always fall into lines that follow perfect formulas and compromise must be made.

Form--Asymmetrical Layout

Asymmetrical design grew out of Japanese architecture which was designed to open outward towards nature rather than inward to enclose interior space. Screens that were used for access and ventilation were often placed at the sides of buildings and were by the nature of their function asymmetrical. Japanese interior design was arranged modularly and was based on the Tatami mat which measured 3 feet by 6 feet in size.

The de Stijl movement, which was born of the cubist revolution and came from Holland, is generally conceded to be the foundation of modern art. Artists used dark lines to divide the canvases in patterns that suggested Japanese asymmetrical design. From the 19th century onward, Japanese prints also influenced the form of Western paintings. Asymmetrical design in Western paintings led in many ways to the development of contemporary graphic design and is the most common layout found in magazines and other print media today.

Asymmetrical design relies heavily on an informal balance that can be produced by using the grid system, a system that carefully plans out the relationship between vertical and horizontal divisions, but is usually a matter of 'feel' on the part of the designer. Elements placed on each side of the page are designed to create the effect of equal weight but the left and right sides of the page do not mirror one another.

The grid system is a planned solution to a given design problem which organizes the content of the layout in relation to the precise space it will occupy. The grid system allows for creating many different layouts within the framework of the same grid, giving a sense of sequential continuity in a series of layouts even when there is considerable variation in content. This was my approach to the Celebration '80 flyers and program as well as the "Only an Orphan Girl" graphics.

The system carefully plans out the relationship between the vertical and horizontal divisions and how they relate to the overall design, bringing various elements, such as type, photos, and art work, into harmony and balance. The grid system brings order to a design and imposes discipline on an untrained designer. However, if the grid is followed too strictly, it can lead to dull, uninteresting layout and many designers rely on an unconscious grid system for this reason.

A general rule of thumb for designing a grid is that the vertical divisions are measured in picas and the horizontal divisions are measured in increments that equal the height of a single line of body type plus the space between the lines. For example, 10 point type with 1 point leading would call for 11 point increments. The copy for the graduate art exhibition catalog and the "Only an Orphan Girl" graphics were both set in this manner with 10 point body type set in 11 points (1 point leading between each line.)

I enjoy working with a grid system because it allows me to be very exact about the vertical and horizontal lines, actual or implied, in a composition. I am sure I have been influenced by my journalism background, as all newspapers use some sort of grid to lay out pages, and the use of columns automatically sets up strong horizontal and vertical lines on the page. For me, the grid system allows me flexibility within a framework.

My approach to graphic design has emphasized the creative process. For this reason, the grid system is of particular usefulness because it provides a framework around which to create. Although many decisions are made deliberately prior to paste-up, such as type style, size, alphabet and column width, other decisions of balance and design are made intuitively, as part of the creative act, within the framework of the grid and any deadlines that I find myself working under.

III. Conclusion

In The Journal of Creative Behavior (1980), an article entitled "Theories of the Creative Process: A Review and a Perspective" summarizes the theories of several psychologists and psychiatrists about the creative process. One in particular, a theory developed by Ernst Kris (1900-1957), who was a native of Vienna and a faculty member of the New York Psychoanalytic Institute, touches on the intuitive aspects of the creative process:

Kris (1952) proposed that creativity consists of an inspirational phase and an elaborational phase. Of the two phases, the inspirational was more heavily emphasized by Kris. He hypothesized that during this phase the ego temporarily loosens its control of thinking processes to permit a regression to a preconscious level of thinking. In this state the ego is more receptive to drive-related impulses and ideas. Primary process thinking--drive oriented but unorganized--predominates, facilitating associations between ideas related to the problem at hand and other seemingly unrelated but potentially useful, ideas . . .

In other words, Kris believed that it is essential in creative thinking to temporarily abandon logical, rational thought that constricts thinking and prevents the formulation of new solutions. The person must deliberately allow daydreams, fantasies, and the like to intrude upon his thinking. Later in an elaborational phase, the ideas are subjected to rigorous logical evaluation.¹

My approach to the arts has emphasized the creative process. Although many decisions are made prior to the creative act, other decisions are made intuitively, what the American College Dictionary defines as of "a direct perception of truths, facts, etc."² during the creative

process.

To a large extent, I have been influenced by my journalism, weaving, and creative writing background, but similarities exist in each of these areas. In many of the same ways I have explored some of the similarities between design elements and graphic design, I can also point to similarities between design elements in weaving and creative writing. In each art form, some design elements are emphasized and others are less important or more abstract, but line, shape, color, texture, and form are involved in all creative work as is the creative process.

In paste-up, as I move the elements about the page, the energy produced by the creative process involves me in decision making that cannot be predetermined. For me, make-up sheets that are prepared prior to paste-up are merely guidelines for the final decisions which are made during paste-up. Although all of these decisions, these "seemingly unrelated but potentially useful, ideas,"³ do not work perfectly every time, they often lead to other decisions that do work.

In journalism, although make-up dummies are generally followed closely, daily or hourly deadlines force the designers, whether editors or paste-up artists, to make decisions as time demands. Although a major part of this decision making is based on previous experience, decisions are also based on what happened moments earlier, the result of momentum and energy. In this way, paste-up is a creative

process. When an error has been made at the copy desk and a headline is too long or short or a story does not fit the given space, the editor or paste-up artist makes a decision, creating changes in the visual and written message. Analysis of the problem, the elaborational phase, may not come until the next day from the designer, a reporter, a reader, or an angry editor.

In weaving, many decisions are also predetermined by the number of warp threads, their length, texture, weight, and color. During the creative process, the weaver adds weft threads of different lengths, textures, weights, and colors. Although the weaver may be following a predetermined design (like the dummy sheets in newspaper paste-up), technical difficulties often call for re-evaluation, a calling up of "seemingly unrelated but potentially useful ideas"⁴ that lead to changes in the predetermined design. These changes often lead to changes in content and form until the final piece may resemble the predetermined design only in warp threads. Even when the piece does resemble the original design, it may not, and probably won't, resemble the artist's original concept.

In creative writing, I find the major decisions are also made during the creative process and the "seemingly unrelated but potentially useful ideas"⁵ are the basic stuff of which poems are made. Although a poem may begin in the mind, it is neither complete nor concise until it is pieced out on the page. Through intuitive feel, "a direct perception of truths, facts, etc."⁶ on the part of the poet, the poem

expresses things of which even the poet is unaware. It is this aspect of creative writing that is the basis of archetypal criticism.

It has been my graduate work in Related Arts that has clarified the similarities within the arts and the creative process in all art forms. Although I find that different schools and departments and different people within the schools and departments express varying philosophies about the nature of art and the creative process, I also find many similarities within these philosophies, the most obvious being participation in the creative process. Although the rhetoric may vary, watching any artist at work emphasizes that the creative process clearly involves resourcefulness and "associations between ideas related to the problem at hand and other, seemingly unrelated but potentially useful, ideas."⁷

Appendix
Evaluations

To: Dean Vaughn Jaenike
From: Terry M. Roller
Date: June 24, 1980
RE: Starla Stensaas
Candidate for Masters in Related Arts

Working with Starla Stensaas has been a pleasure. I have found her written material to be in-depth and perceptive. Her design work, although journalistic in approach as would be expected from her background, is well thought out, pertinent and often innovative. She has shown herself to be a very diligent worker and a delightful person.

Terry M. Roller
Instructor, Art Department
Eastern Illinois University

Evaluation of Graphic Materials Submitted by
Starla Stensaas, Candidate for Masters in Related
Arts, for Independent Study in Graphic Design,
May 10, 1980

My main contact with Starla was during a 3 hour independent study in Technology Education. The course work includes the design and lay-out of business cards and stationary, publicity for Celebration '80, a resumé, and a catalog for the graduate art exhibition.

Starla's work on the business cards gave her experience with the PMT (photo-mechanical transfer) and electro-static equipment. There was a slight thickening of the characters on the business cards, largely due to the equipment Starla had available to her. In spite of these limitations, she was able to obtain successful results.

The design of the Celebration material was dictated by the chronology of the events involved which left Starla reasonably limited in creative possibilities. In spite of this, I feel Starla was able to produce a pleasing lay-out through choices in typography, color placement, and illustrations.

The most outstanding feature of Starla's work was the resumé. It was appealing both technically and creatively. There exists a controversy concerning the proper elements of a resumé. Traditionally, the resumé included a combination of experience information and personal information. Starla chose to

leave out the personal information and the picture, a choice which, combined with the contemporary design, is a progressive decision indicative of her character.

The graduate art exhibition catalog demanded work with half-tone production. This experience has supplied her with the necessary information to communicate effectively with a darkroom technician. One of the drawbacks, perhaps, with the educational system is that often the designers, printers, darkroom techicans, etc., are trained either creatively or technically. Starla's experience has forced her to deal with both aspects of the printing process, thereby supplying her with the essential communication skills to bridge the creative/technical gap.

Paul E. Kuchenmeister
Instructor, School of Technology Education
Eastern Illinois University

Evaluation of Feature News Stories and Public Relations Articles Created by Starla Stensaas in Fulfillment of Requirements for Related Arts Master's Degree, Oct. 13, 1980

1. Four Newspaper Feature Stories

Writing and Organization. Starla's proficiency reaches the professional level. Mechanical problems are few and not necessarily attributable to the writer. Good use of quotes, paraphrasing, and attribution. Two minor writing problems: a tendency to write overlong paragraphs and occasional lack of definition of terms which the general reader may not understand ("whole living," "minimal construction," "playability").

Organization is satisfactory on the whole.

Reporting. The interviewing and research conducted for the stories seems generally to have been adequate, although ABE would have been clearer if explanation of how the program is integrated into the classroom had been included; Rogers lacks the perspective which better definition of who she is now would have added; and Whitworths should have explored how well the artists' lifestyle worked economically.

News Judgments. Conceptualization of the enterprise stories was excellent: the motive for creating Orphan Girl and the Whitworth's philosophy were the real stories there, as the writer recognized. The framework is weaker, however, in the assigned stories, where crucial questions are unanswered: how does ABE improve

on existing practises, and why is Rogers living in Oakland and not continuing her career.

2. Public Relations Materials

Celebration '80. Writing and reporting exhibited in the stories are sound, the effectiveness is demonstrated by comparing pieces as they are used by various newspapers: they are printed as submitted. The approach--using several pieces on various types of events to increase frequency of publicity--and the timing--concentrating on the week before the event is scheduled--are well conceived. I would like to have seen evidence of more widespread market coverage. One general suggestion: stories should be tailored to meet the needs of different areas by emphasizing participation in the events by local residents or students from those areas.

Tarble Players. The effectiveness of this piece is obvious from the publication evidence. Again, however, more publicity might have been generated by featuring area residents involved or, as in the case of Mattoon, the presentation of the play in that locality. Including the publicity photo probably garnered for the story better play than it otherwise would have received.

Around the Arts. All the work here is satisfactory, although in several instances the leads are burdened unnecessarily by over-emphasis on attribution.

3. Conclusion

Starla's writing, reporting, and news judgments exemplified in the work submitted reach the professional level and are satisfactory on all counts. In graduate terms with which I am familiar, I would record a high pass.

John David Reed

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Eastern Illinois University

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Date: December 11, 1980

To: Dean Vaughn Jaenike
From: Carol E. Elder *Carol E. Elder*
Re: Evaluation of Writing by Starla Stensaas, candidate for Masters
in Related Arts

The public relations articles and feature news stories which Starla wrote in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters in Related Arts degree are clear, informative, and interesting. Her feature stories are well-unified, in-depth explorations of her subjects; even when she is handling material which consists chiefly of lists of facts--like the news stories on Celebration '80 events--the facts are logically grouped and the stories are easy to follow. An occasional sentence with an awkwardly placed modifier is more than compensated for by lucidity of overall patterns of organization.

Reading these articles now, gathered together as a project, I am impressed by the consistently recurrent concern in Starla's work for the relationship between the arts and people's ordinary experience. Her thorough reporting of the wide variety of interests in Celebration '80 events was necessitated, no doubt, by the nature of the festival, but her emphasis on the experiences, the feelings, and the reactions of both performers and audience to the traveling melodrama give a consciously selected, very interesting focus to the reporting. The feature stories all emphasize the integration of the arts and daily life: how instruction in music can reinforce math skills, how demolishing a barn can become an artistic performance, how it feels to create art.

Starla's demonstrated sensitivity to this concern, and her interest in and ability to publicize it are, I believe, highly appropriate for a Masters in Related Arts candidate. This project is evidence not only of Starla's own success at "relating the arts," but also of the success of the program.

Footnotes

¹Thomas V. Busse and Richard S. Mansfield, "Theories of the Creative Process: A Review and Perspective," The Journal of Creative Behavior 14 (Second Quarter, 1980):91-92.

²The American College Dictionary, (1970), New York: Random House, 640.

³Ibid., The Journal of Creative Behavior, 92.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid., The American College Dictionary.

⁷Ibid., The Journal of Creative Behavior, 92.

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